

LAC COURTE OREILLES TRIBAL GOVERNMENT

Testimony on AB 204

May 19, 2009

The Lac Courte Oreilles Tribe submits this testimonial in support of the Bill to renumber and amend n8.40 (3) (c) 1.; and to create n8.40 (3) (c) 1.c. of the statutes; relating to: establishing a charter school in conjunction with an Indian tribe.

Under current law, a school board may not establish a charter school located outside the school district unless it is in cooperation with a CESA and the charter school may then be located within the CESA district. However, the "intergovernmental cooperation" language of n8.40 implies that Tribes may be a part of the charter process but the law is not explicit.

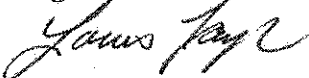
The Lac Courte Oreilles Tribe supports this Bill because it would allow our Tribe to partner with the Winter School District to establish an Ojibwe Language Immersion charter school on our reservation. The school would be physically located outside of Winter's district boundaries but within the boundaries of our reservation.

The charter school structure is an ideal educational model for language immersion efforts because school's curriculum and method of instruction can be designed to enhance Ojibwe language learning. In Charter Schools for American Indians Brian Bielenberg states:

The principles behind charter schools, in fact, seem tailor-made to address the calls for greater local control and culturally and linguistically relevant programs that have been heard repeatedly from Indian parents and communities.

This Bill will provide the Lac Courte Oreilles reservation community an additional option for the education of our children. We ask you to please consider passage of this Bill because it is important to ensure the continued survival of our language.

Miigwech.



Respectfully,

Louis Taylor, Chairman

Lac Courte Oreilles Tribal Government

WINTER SCHOOL DISTRICT

Testimony on AB 204

May 18, 2009

The Winter School District is submitting this testimonial in support of the Bill to renumber and amend 118.40 (3) (c) 1.; and to create 118.40 (3) (c) 1.c. of the statutes; relating to: establishing a charter school in conjunction with an Indian tribe.

Under current law, a school board may not establish a charter school located outside the school district unless it is in cooperation with a CESA and the charter school may then be located within the CESA district. The Winter School District supports this Bill because it would allow our district to partner with the Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwa tribe to establish a charter school on the reservation, but outside of our district boundaries.

This is important legislation for our district because we work in close partnership with the Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwa tribe in many facets. We partner with the Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwa School (LCO) by sharing sports programs, our music teachers and we also share many opportunities for student learning with LCO.

We have an opportunity to establish an elementary charter school centering on Ojibwa language immersion. This would be a great opportunity for our district to honor our Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwa heritage and provide an excellent educational opportunity for our students. There is a perfect location near the LCO School which is considered our sister school, however, it is not in our school district. The Lac Courte Oreilles tribe, LCO school officials and the Winter School District are all excited about offering this enriching experience to our students, but we need this legislation in order to establish this school on the site near the LCO School on the LCO reservation.

The Winter School District covers a vast amount of land area. We serve students in 699 square miles. Part of our district serves students living on the LCO reservation. They are located approximately 20-25 miles from our district building. The site of the building where we would be able to establish our charter school would be closer for parents as it is within 5-10 miles. This school would be open to all of our students; however, we know the majority of the families interested are from the LCO reservation or in close proximity to the reservation. This location would be perfect and convenient for our families. It would also be convenient for the tribal members who would be teaching in the school and serving on the governance Board.

Please consider passage of the Bill. It would benefit many students in our district and many families. It would also help the Winter School District strengthen its relationship with the LCO tribe. This Bill is also important to the preservation of our Ojibwa heritage. We need to honor our history and allow it to live on in our youth.

Thank you for your attention into this matter.

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Penny L. Boileau, District Administrator of the Winter School District